

**NH Advisory Committee on Fire Protection Certification
Meeting Minutes June 7, 2006**

Present: Lawrence Thibodeau, Richard Driscoll, Chris Burns, Robert Musil,
John Mooney, Robert Farley & Len Daniels

Also present: Three members of ECBA

Old Business: Chris Burns reviewed the Minutes from May 10 Meeting and asked why there was no reference to conversations regarding how the proposal the Committee has been crafting may eventually be made mandatory.

Robert Farley stated that the possibility of this voluntary proposal becoming mandatory has been discussed and entered into numerous past Minutes. Such discussions can be found in Meeting Minutes from December 2005, March 2006 and April 2006.

Chris Burns: It is important down the road that it has been commented on that this proposal may become mandatory. Should the Committee be recording these meetings?

Robert Farley: He will check with Marta and JLCAR.

Len Daniels: At the end of the day, this is a voluntary proposal we have been charged to craft and once it leaves the Committee, it is out of our hands.

It was voted to add the May 2006 Minutes be amended to add the following comment by Richard Driscoll: "The Committee knows this program is voluntary with the knowledge that certain municipalities will make it mandatory".

John Mooney moved to accept the amended Minutes and Len Daniels seconded.

New Business:

Lawrence Thibodeau received an e-mail from Steve Rancourt with the following questions:

- a) What are the rules for Committee guidelines?
- b) Have there been posted notices for public meetings?
- c) Is there a website where the Minutes are posted?
- d) How can he get Minutes electronically?
- e) How can a person get a chance to speak before the Committee?

Robert Farley: Marta of JLCAR has the questions and a response is being formalized. It is the Committee's intention to follow all guidelines for public meetings. Also, a location for public notice is being developed.

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Lawrence Thibodeau: We are just an Advisory Committee and is this a public forum?

Robert Farley: The Fire Marshal's Office will comply with the statute. There will also be plenty of time for public input. Once the Committee's work is complete, benchmarks will have to take place for comment. We will be providing public notice and the Minutes will be available to anyone who requests them. The only question he is not certain of is "The opportunity to speak". It is his opinion that if every meeting turns into a public hearing, the work will never get done.

Lawrence Thibodeau: It is important to remember that each Committee member is a representative of their respective trade and it is up to them to keep their disciplines apprised.

Robert Farley: Asked the Committee if we can make permanent the revisions to 5-10-2006?

Lawrence Thibodeau: "Yes; keeping in mind that this proposal is still evolving."

Chris Burns passed out handouts which were recommendations from the Electrical Contractors Business Association (ECBA) concerning qualifications for persons installing and servicing fire alarm and detection systems.

Chris Burns: he understands that Steve Mango will have a list of qualification ideas from the NH Alarm Association so these handouts are just a starting point for discussion. R-319-C referred to by the ECBA states that the 'Responsible Managing Employee' is the Master Electrician working for the firm.

ECBA Handout Comments:

Robert Farley: Does not think their 'Saf-C 1201-Purpose a) No local or state agency can require this voluntary certification to become mandatory' amendment will fly.

Chris Burns: The ECBA just wanted it to be in the proposal so Marta from JLCAR can review it.

Lawrence Thibodeau: Is not for the ECBA proposed amendment to Saf-C 1201.01-Purpose.

Len Daniels: Should the Committee vote to put changes into the proposal?

Robert Farley: As a Committee, we have not held specific votes since there have been no points of contention. But if there is a point of contention, maybe a motion should be made to vote on a contentious point.

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Richard Driscoll: The role of the Committee is to come up with a consensus of one bill and then move it forward.

Chris Burns: As these things come up, they need to be discussed and if JLCAR redlines and item, so be it.

Robert Farley: His role as a non-voting member is an advisory one and to assist the Committee to steer clear of landmines. The Commissioner will rely on the Committee's expertise as a Committee and Marta's as an advisor to get it by JLCAR. With his experience on other Committees, ECBA's proposed amendment to 'Saf-C-1201.01-Purpose' is a red flag. This amendment affects all trades as opposed to being a trade-specific amendment.

Len Daniels: Reminded the Committee that RSA153:5-6 focuses on the voluntary certification process.

Chris Burns: Can Marta review the proposal?

Lawrence Thibodeau: Called for a vote which was NOT to accept the ECBA's amendment of 'Saf-C-1201.01-Purpose' which states 'No local or state agency can require this voluntary certification to become mandatory.'

VOTE: Four members, Lawrence Thibodeau, Len Daniels, Richard Driscoll and John Mooney voted NOT to accept the ECBA amendment and Chris Burns voted to accept.

Lawrence Thibodeau: Asked Chris Burns if it is the ECBA's recommendation that the Committee strike Saf-C-1201.02 (b)(5) and insert R-319-C? Will this make liscensed electricians in neighboring states exempt?

Chris Burns: Yes

Lawrence Thibodeau: Then using the same criteria, maybe Massachusetts sprinkler or suppression companies should be given NH certification?

Len Daniels: Does RSA-319.C cover fire alarms?

Chris Burns: RSA 319.C references NFPA-70 which references NFPA-72 & 101. Also, the State Electrician Boards Apprenticeship program is using the curriculum from Minnesota's Electrician Board which has extensive fire alarm training.

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Robert Farley: Asked Chris Burns if ECBA can research how many states with licensed electricians are exempted from a fire alarm certification test.

Lawrence Thibodeau: There are electricians that never have done fire alarm work and why should they be granted wholesale exemptions? If they can meet the qualifications, then they should be certified.

John Mooney: Asked Chris Burns if there is an aversion by the ECBA to testing?

Chris Burns: Yes as this is just another level of testing and red tape that impinges on their time.

Robert Farley: The Fire Marshal has a concern about issuing wholesale exemptions and rather than center on wholesale exemptions, it would be more beneficial to make the proposal inclusive. This exemption topic has been much discussed and it may be time to bring this issue to a vote.

John Mooney: Can we hold off on voting until Chris Burns has time to go back to the ECBA and asks them about Robert Farley's questions about electricians being exempted from fire alarm certification testing in other states as well as two other questions;

- a) Would an electrician be amenable to conform to the minimum insurance requirements for Fire Alarm and Detection Systems?
- b) Would an electrician be willing to conform to the continuing education requirements for Fire Alarm and Detection Systems?

Chris Burns: He will bring these questions before the ECBA and have answers by the next meeting.

Robert Farley: For the record, is there a consensus to table this matter until next meeting?

All: Yes

It was also decided to table Steve Mango's submissions until he is present next meeting.

Chris Burns moved to adjourn the meeting and Robert Farley seconded.

Next Meeting Weds, August 2, 2006 9am

Respectfully submitted,
John Mooney
Secretary

